

Maine Sheriff's Association Proposal for Consideration

1. We think the most important component that needs to be fixed, changed, reformed, rebuilt, whatever, is the budget process. First of all, lets go back to the original agreement where the process was to work like this:

A County is given their individual growth rate (We'll come back to that). County presents budget, If budget is under growth rate it is approved without further delay, if over growth rate, it is brought back for presentation by county and review of board. (Title 30-A § 710)

BOC adds up final amount of all budgets and THEN goes to Appropriations asking for the full amount "actual costs" (Title 30-A § 1803 under administrative duties 5E), not just what they think they can get. (This is where BOC went way wrong in the beginning) BOC took on the role of parenting the counties and saying no to the allowance when it's job was to be there for the counties and advocate for their funds with appropriations. We have no idea how we got so lost on this plan. What should have happened was the counties and BOC shoulder to shoulder in front of appropriations asking them to pay for what they bought.

2. Growth Rates..... There are a few options here but it will certainly need to be agreed upon by the counties. We have heard some suggestions around LD 1 which has some merit. We would also suggest that a workshop to look at something around ADP in conjunction with CPI and any other variable that would influence a jail budget. Once a formula for a growth rate is established, and an ADP set on a particular facility, there should be no question as to what the "appropriate growth rate" would look like.
3. Now let's tackle the real bear in the bushes, the surplus or fund balances. First of all, We don't know why we have had such a hard time with this in the first place. The law that the counties had to comply with for the rest of their surplus funds (30A § 0924) could apply here as well. Lets agree on what that percentage it is that can be kept in a reserve and what percentage must go back to reduce the tax levy (against next budget). If we can all agree to comply with this principle that we already work with in our other business, then the question around fund balances goes away. If the state is unable or unwilling to begin to look at the inverse funding of declining capital debt for the future of corrections, then perhaps this is a tool that BOC uses to preserve the future of county corrections.
4. NOTHING ELSE PROGRESSES UNTIL THE ABOVE IS TAKEN CARE OF FIRST